



Department of Human Resources
311 West Saratoga Street
BaltimoreMD21201

Family Investment Administration
ACTION TRANSMITTAL

Control Number: 14-02

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**TO: DIRECTORS, LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES
DEPUTY / ASSISTANT DIRECTORS FOR FAMILY INVESTMENT
FAMILY INVESTMENT SUPERVISORS AND ELIGIBILITY STAFF**

FROM: ROSEMARY MALONE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FIA

**RE: MARYLAND HEALTH CONNECTION CONTINGENCY PROCEDURES
AND THE APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANCE (DHR/FIA CARES 9701)
ADDENDUM (DHR/FIA CARES 9701-A)**

PROGRAM AFFECTED: MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF PROGRAMS

SUMMARY:

The Affordable Care Act creates low-cost, private health insurance options for uninsured individuals and families and expands Medical Assistance by increasing the maximum income levels to 138% of the federal poverty level effective January 1, 2014. The pre-enrollment process begins on October 1, 2013 and ends on December 31, 2013. During pre-enrollment, customers can apply for Medical Assistance and shop for affordable private health insurance through the [Maryland Health Connection \(MHC\)](#), an internet application that will automatically determine eligibility for some applicants and pre-enroll them for health coverage with an effective date of January 1, 2014. Customers can also apply in the local health departments and the local departments of social services, where Navigators will be stationed to help.

During pre-enrollment, the MHC system cannot determine eligibility for the existing Medical Assistance program; case managers must use CARES to determine eligibility for any customer who expresses an interest in Medical Assistance or health coverage now.

In preparation for pre-enrollment, the Family Investment Administration has developed two new tools to assist local offices. One is a two-page addendum to the existing Application for Assistance (DHR/FIA 9701) so that case managers can collect important information needed for the Maryland Health Connection system should the customer be determined ineligible for Medical Assistance or if the case is in preserve ("M") status for spend down. The other tool is an automated application that can be used if the MHC system is not functioning. This tool will not be available unless DHR releases it.

ACTION REQUIRED:

Local departments must follow the procedures outlined below when using the application addendum or the MHC contingency application.

Application Addendum (DHR/FIA 9701-A)

Procedures for October 1, 2013 –December 31, 2013

- 1) When customers indicate they are interested in filing for Medical Assistance or health care now, give the customer the 9701-A addendum to complete along with the DHR/FIA 9701 or 9711 form. If your office has a SAIL lab that customers use to file applications, then provide the paper 9701-A for them to fill out after they have submitted the on-line SAIL application.
- 2) If the customer is determined ineligible for Medical Assistance under the current rules in CARES, or if the case is in preserve (“M”) status for spend down, enter the customer’s information into the MHC system, using the 9701 or the EDD or the SAIL application along with the 9701-A addendum. The on-site Navigator can assist the customer with selecting a health insurance plan from the options available.

Procedures for January 1, 2014 forward

- 1) Encourage customers who visit your office to use on-site computers to enter their own information into the MHC. The system will determine eligibility for Medical Assistance after January 1, 2014, and will inform the customers of the different health insurance plans available should they not qualify for Medical Assistance. If the customer wants to apply for other DSS benefits (Temporary Cash Assistance, Food Supplement Program, Temporary Disability Assistance Program, etc.), encourage the customer to enter information into SAIL.
- 2) If on-site computers are not available, give the customer the 9701-A addendum to complete along with the DHR/FIA 9701 or 9711 form. Use the addendum to data enter the customer’s information into MHC. That system will communicate with the customer about any verifications that are needed for Medical Assistance as well as the health insurance plans.
- 3) If a customer requests a paper application to apply only for health care or Medical Assistance, provide the paper version of the Maryland Health Connection application, the Application for Health Coverage & Help Paying Costs, and encourage the customer to mail it to the address listed on the application, which is a Consolidated Service Center operated by the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange. If the customer returns the paper application to the local department of social services, then data enter the customer’s application into MHC. (This application and the 9701 Addendum can also be found on the online forms on the FIPNet.)

MHC Fillable Application Contingency Procedures

The MHC system is brand new and involves complicated relationships with other systems, such as “the Federal hub” in order to automate verification as much as possible. If our customers or case managers experience extreme difficulties with the system that cannot be resolved through training or the help desk, then the DHR Secretary will deploy a contingency strategy to allow customers and case managers to data enter an automated paper Application for Health Coverage & Help Paying Costs that will feed into MHC behind the scenes.

Case managers should ask the Change Champions and super users in their office for help when experiencing difficulties in using MHC. Technical problems need to be reported to the Consolidated Service Center for investigation and resolution.

OTHER IMPORTANT POINTS ABOUT HEALTH CARE REFORM:

1) Beginning January 1, 2014, customers who are not eligible for Medicaid may still be eligible for potential tax credits or other supports to purchase insurance through the Maryland Health Connection. During pre-enrollment, case managers need to assist customers by determining eligibility through CARES before directing them to the MHC to pre-enroll. These customers should apply for health care through the MHC and/or be directed to a *Navigator*.

2) A *Navigator* is a staff person employed by a local agency or health care Connector Entity who is trained to assist customers in applying for health insurance as well as choose a health plan from the various Qualified Health Plans available in Maryland.

3) Some offices will not have a *Navigator* but they might have an *Assister*. An *Assister* is someone on staff with the local agency or partner organization who has been trained to assist customers when enrolling in the Maryland Health Connection. Assisters **cannot** help customers shop for a Qualified Health Plan.

4) Certain recipients will convert automatically to the MHC on January 1, 2014:

- Single adults who are Active in the Primary Adult Care (PAC) program; and,
- Customers who have Active FAC and MCHP cases in CARES.

Customers who are in preserve status for spend down in FAC will not convert to MHC. These customers will need to apply for health coverage through MHC.

5) Customers who are applying for health coverage can appeal decisions made at the local departments of social services and decisions made by the MHC system. The appeals process for customers determined eligible or ineligible for a Qualified Health Program (QHP) will be handled through the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange's Consolidated Service Center. During pre-enrollment, LDSS will continue to handle appeals of decisions made in CARES.

COMMAND CENTER:

Maryland will operate a Command Center from October 1, 2013 through October 7, 2013 in order to ensure a smooth transition into pre-enrollment. DHR, DHMH and MHBE central will staff the center between 6:00 AM and 8:00 PM daily. The center will monitor activities in the local department of social services, health department offices, community-based providers and the Connector Entities to ensure Marylanders have access and are able to complete the MHC application process.

DHR is using several methods of collecting information to assess success of pre-enrollment:

- 1) Each district office will report the number of visitors who come to the office in person as well as the number of applications received by mail or fax or SAIL each day, with reports at three points of the day during the first week (Oct. 1-7, 2013). This information is captured through automated systems in each office. Some offices will use a new tool called Visitor Registration that is available in the SAIL Admin website; others will continue to use their own systems (such as Q Flow, Free Flow or a database for their own office).
- 2) Change Champions and other designated staff within each office will report issues to DHR and ask policy and procedure questions through a DHRNet blog, and call the Consolidated Service Center to report systems issues or ask questions about specific cases.
- 3) DHR also will operate an internal hotline for general questions and rapid resolution of issues arising in local offices during this initial launch timeframe. The hotline number is 410-767-1727.
- 4) Report issues regarding specific cases in MHC by calling the Consolidated Service Center, at **1-855-642-8572**.

TECHNICAL PROCEDURES:

Local departments will use existing protocol to report and track technical issues to the Maryland Health Connections Consolidated Service Center. Each office has identified a primary and alternate security monitor who will serve as the designated point of contact for Maryland Health Connection issues. A list of local department monitors is attached

ACTION DUE: October 1, 2013

INQUIRIES:

Issues regarding specific cases in MHC should be called in to the Consolidated Service

Center, at **1-855-642-8572**. Health Care Reform inquiries should be directed to Ida March at 410-767-4369 or ida.march@maryland.gov. Medical Assistance policy questions should be directed to the DHMH Division of Eligibility Policy at 410-767-1463 or 1-800-492-5231 (Select option 2 and request extension 1463).

ATTACHMENTS:

Family Investment Administration Application for Assistance Health Care Reform
Addendum 9701A

List of Change Champions and Security Monitors

cc: DHR Executive Staff,
FIA Management Staff
Constituent Services,
Help Desk
Policy Research and Training Staff